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Report by Dr. Paul F. Langer dated 12/12/62 on Meeting with Kaoru Yasui:

MEETING WITH A LENIN PEACE PRIZE WINNER

Introduction

On November 19, I had an opportunity to listen and talk to Lenin Peace Prize Winner, Professor Kaoru Yasui. Yasui's important role in the international peace movement and his close relation to Moscow and Peking may justify this brief account of my meeting with him. I have kept my own interpretations to a minimum leaving the reader to draw his own conclusions.

Professor Yasui is presently Dean of the Faculty of Law and professor of international law at one of Tokyo's larger private universities, but his claim to fame is his leadership in the Japanese "peace movement" and the international position which he has been able to create for it and for himself. Yasui is the founder and chairman of the Japan Council Against A- and H-Bombs known in Japan as Gensuikyo. This organization is one of the most important Japanese pressure groups and certainly the one which most directly affects Japan's rearmament policy and the U. S. military position in Japan. Gensuikyo has been largely responsible for maintaining at a very high level the Japanese people's sensitivity to nuclear matters. It has also been in the forefront of the left-wing struggle against the presence of American military bases on Japanese soil and against the Security Pact with the United States. At present, Gensuikyo is especially active in organizing opposition to the proposed visit of U. S. nuclear-propelled submarines and the stationing of F-105D fighter-bombers in Japan.

Every year in August, around the date of the Hiroshima bombing, Gensuikyo holds a world conference against nuclear weapons. This conference (which I attended once as an observer) has increasingly developed into an international forum for Communist propaganda and now serves as a platform from which Communist proposals for a nuclear-free zone, for the dismantling of U. S. overseas bases, and for support of the national liberation struggle can be effectively presented.

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25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

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With the development of the Japanese anti-nuclear movement during the late 1950's into a major instrument of international Communist policy, Yasui's stature in the Communist world has increased correspondingly. He and his family have been the house guests of Khrushchev at the latter's summer villa on the Black Sea, and Moscow has conferred on him its Lenin Peace Prize. At the same time, however, Yasui for several years now has been a frequent and welcome visitor to Peking where he has had interviews with Mao and other Chinese Communist leaders. Last year, upon returning from Moscow, Yasui and his daughter were again received by Mao Tse-tung. There is ample evidence that Yasui continues even today to enjoy intimate and excellent relations with both Moscow and Peking -- or perhaps I should say that both are wooing him. The conflict between Mao and Khrushchev poses not merely a very delicate problem for Yasui personally. With the growing bitterness of the Sino-Soviet exchanges and open Chinese opposition to the partial nuclear test ban, Yasui as the policy-maker of the anti-nuclear movement, is faced with a severe dilemma.

Background of a Lenin Prize Winner

Whether Yasui is a Communist constitutes a favorite subject of discussion in Japan and abroad. For a number of reasons, it is unlikely that Yasui is an actual Party member, although his speeches and behavior clearly support Communist policies. Yasui makes no secret of the fact that his ideology is that of Marxist-Leninism. He told me so himself.

The interesting thing is that Yasui once was a fervent nationalist who expressed strong sympathy for the German National Socialist movement. As a result, the Allied Occupation authorities purged him after the war as an ultra-nationalist, something for which Yasui (like many other Japanese in similar circumstances) has probably never forgiven the United States. It seems that these two experiences have had a good deal to do with Yasui's postwar behavior. There is no doubt that Yasui is suffering of a guilty conscience and that he is trying to offset his prewar and wartime records through postwar support for the extreme left wing. By being the most active proponent of the "peace movement" in Japan Yasui apparently believes he can erase the memory of his nationalist past.

Yasui's personality has also had something to do with propelling him onto the speaker's platform. He is not an ivory tower scholar but craves involvement in public affairs. Yasui is an excellent speaker,

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enamoured with the sound of his own voice. In Japanese he is, of course, very persuasive but he can be an effective orator and debater even in English -- a language in which he is much less fluent. Yasui enjoys being the center of attention. His rather feminine features and appearance conceal a very ambitious and dynamic man whom many Japanese observers classify as "a dedicated opportunist."

I have known Yasui and his family (i.e., wife and daughter) for some time, having met him first several years ago when I attended (in the capacity of an observer) the Gensuikyo world congress in Hiroshima and I have since established some kind of a personal relationship. Thus, I had the opportunity to spend an evening at Yasui's home immediately after the Soviet Union resumed its most recent nuclear test series. In 1961, I also met Yasui's daughter in Moscow (where she was then studying Russian literature at Moscow University) when both of us attended a "Japanese evening" at Lumumba University. While I am thus in a good position to size up Yasui, my desire to maintain an open channel for communications with the Japanese anti-nuclear leader has prevented me at times from questioning him as sharply as I might have wanted to and has forced me occasionally to refrain from putting some embarrassing questions to him for fear of endangering our relationship. This consideration also affected my discussions with Yasui on November 19.

Background of Yasui's Visit to the United States

This is Yasui's first real visit to the United States. I say "real" because Yasui has passed through Anchorage several times on his way to or from international peace conferences in the Soviet Union or Europe. Two years ago, elements in the American peace movement apparently suggested that Yasui might wish to come to the United States and present his views. It seems that these plans crystallized only this year and that he made application for a U.S. visa late in October. Yasui has been invited or is being sponsored by a rather motley group which includes Linus Pauling (an occasional participant in the Japanese anti-nuclear world conferences) as well as Cyrus Eaton and the extreme left wing National Guardian, a weekly that is better known in pro-Communist circles abroad than here in the United States.

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According to Yasui, the U. S. Embassy and especially Ambassador Reischauer strenuously and consistently opposed Yasui's visit to the United States but the Department of State eventually decided to grant a visa as a result of the efforts made on behalf of Yasui by members of Congress and other "friends." At least this is Yasui's version. The U. S. visa was apparently issued only on the eve of Yasui's scheduled departure from Tokyo, November 14.

Yasui planned to spend about twelve days in the United States before proceeding to a meeting of the World Peace Council in Warsaw (which has since taken place). He expected to visit ten U. S. cities, make thirty speeches, and meet with a number of well-known figures, including UN Secretary U Thant. Yasui expressed the hope of returning to the United States in the near future for a longer stay.

The following account reflects the gist of Professor Yasui's remarks addressed in English to a group of American and Japanese students at UCLA; of a brief personal conversation Yasui had with me after the meeting; and of a twenty-minute discussion at the UCLA student cafeteria where I and some five or six Japanese students and professors conversed with Yasui in Japanese. For convenience's sake, I have arranged the substance of Yasui's remarks under topical headings.

YASUI'S VIEW OF THE SINO-SOVIET CONFLICT

Like most Japanese left-wingers, Yasui is greatly pained by the conflict between Moscow and Peking. Not only does this conflict raise ideological questions for him, but it plunges the Japanese peace movement of which he is the leader into confusion.

This was illustrated at the anti-nuclear world congress in Hiroshima in August of this year when the Chinese representative used this forum to attack violently the Soviets and their position on the nuclear test ban and the Soviet delegates and their Japanese Socialist allies responded more or less in kind. The world conference was turned into a battleground between the Moscow and Peking representatives, as well as between the Japanese Communists who generally incline toward adoption of the Peking line, and the Japanese Socialists who are reluctant to alienate the Chinese, but tend to support Moscow on the test ban and on peaceful co-existence. The result has been that despite Yasui's frantic efforts to cover up these differences, most of the Socialists walked out of the world congress and left the Japanese

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anti-nuclear movement to the Communists and pro-Communists. As so many times in the past, the movement in Japan is now once more split into at least two camps.

Yasui's replies to some of my questions about Sino-Soviet relations together with what is known of his activities in Japan suggest that he has made strenuous efforts in Tokyo, Moscow, and Peking to reconcile the two contending Communist viewpoints, not only insofar as they affect the policies of the Japanese anti-nuclear forces but also in their impact on the unity of the Communist-sponsored international peace movement.

Yasui stated that last year when talking to Mao Tse-tung, he could sense the seriousness of the conflict between Mao and Khrushchev. He expressed the view that this conflict has three principal reasons: differences between Chinese and Soviets with regard to the interpretation of Marxism-Leninism; concrete problems standing between the two Communist powers; and a clash of personalities.

Yasui feels that the personality aspect of the Sino-Soviet conflict has become more pronounced recently. Although a convinced Marxist, he stated that even in relations between Socialist countries the personal factor, that is, the character of the leadership, etc., are of real importance. In response to my questions, Yasui repeatedly remarked that he "fully understood" the Chinese reasons for their policies and statements, but carefully refrained from explicitly endorsing them. Even so, it was obvious that, as in the case of most Japanese, at least Yasui's emotional sympathies lie with the Chinese. On the other hand, he is aware of the fact that the Soviet Union commands great power on the international scene, that "peaceful co-existence" is a potent slogan in Japan and that he personally has politically profited from the honors which the Soviet Union has heaped on him.

When I sought Yasui's reaction to the question of the future of the Sino-Soviet relationship, the gist of his reply was that relations between the two Communist power centers (power centers is my term) might improve but that such improvement would take considerable time. He did not think that the conflict could disappear in the immediate or even the near future. In response to my question as to whether a change in the Chinese leadership after the death of Mao Tse-tung might bring about some adjustment in Chinese policy, Yasui replied that he thought there could very well be some adjustments, but he doubted that these would be very drastic.

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CHINESE FOREIGN AND NUCLEAR POLICIES

In response to my and several other persons' questions, Yasui addressed himself from time to time to the issue of Chinese foreign policy and Chinese intentions.

Yasui asserted, as one might expect, that Communist China has a legitimate right to be a member of the United Nations and that the Peking regime quite rightly refused to enter the United Nations as a favor. He stated on several occasions that the Chinese were not necessarily keen on becoming a member of the United Nations because "there were still a number of concrete and practical problems" that would have to be resolved before Peking could consider membership. While he avoided being more specific, it was obvious that what he referred to was the Taiwan problem and the presence of the rival Chinese Nationalist regime in the United Nations. It was my impression that Yasui's statement reflected what he had been told in Peking by the Chinese Communist leaders.

A second point Yasui made concerned the Chinese Communist position on the use of force. He denied that the Peking regime had ever advocated aggressive action, denied that the Peking regime had contemplated the use of force even with regard to the Taiwan problem, and defended the Peking regime in its handling of the Indian border issue. He implied that anyone who took the trouble of studying the facts would find that Peking's actions toward India had been fully justified.

Interesting was Yasui's answer to my question regarding his view of the Communist Chinese position on the nuclear test ban treaty. Here he obviously found himself confronted with a dilemma. On one hand Yasui leads a movement that has been consistently pressing for a nuclear test ban. On the other hand, strong opposition to the Chinese stand would alienate the extreme leftist and Communist elements, i. e., the activists in the Japanese peace movement and deprive Gensuikyo and Yasui of support in Peking.

Yasui proved himself the perfect diplomat precariously operating between Moscow and Peking: he supported the test ban treaty and at the same time minimized its importance. He pointed to the danger that the "forces of peace" might as a result of the conclusion of the treaty let down their guard and consider the battle largely won. This, he said, was a real danger and the Chinese had clearly recognized it. The nuclear test ban treaty, he stated, could only be considered a very first step. It must be followed by other steps leading to complete and total disarmament.

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Such essential measures included the destruction of nuclear weapons and the dismantling of (American) overseas bases. Then, turning to an interpretation of Chinese behavior, Yasui asserted that the Chinese position was "essentially one of sounding a strong warning against the dangers of misinterpreting the implications of the treaty." The Chinese were thus, according to Yasui, merely calling on the forces of peace to maintain extreme vigilance. In this way Yasui justified the Chinese position although he admitted that the language in which the Chinese couch their "warning" to the peace fighters might be a bit violent. On the whole -- and here he reflected the attitude of the Japanese left wing -- Yasui attempted to minimize Sino-Soviet differences on the nuclear issue.

YASUI'S VIEW OF THE UNITED STATES

In a subtle but rather effective way Yasui painted an image of the United States as an imperialist power where the growing "forces of peace" were struggling hard to influence domestic and foreign policy.

Thus on one hand, Yasui frequently accused United States policy, for instance, by showing the picture of a horribly-deformed child born in atom-bombed Hiroshima and by asserting that U. S. nuclear testing at Bikini violated all international norms and laws. On the other hand, Yasui asserted that he had obtained his American visa despite the fact that the U. S. ambassador in Tokyo had strongly opposed the granting of such a visa as not being in the U. S. interest, because his (Yasui's) American friends in the peace movement and some members of Congress had successfully made their influence felt. "The forces of peace had eventually won out" and at the last moment he, Yasui, had been granted a visa so that he, the peace fighter, was now in the United States, able to tell the American people the truth about the Japanese peace movement and enjoying his first opportunity to assess personally the growing strength of the "forces of peace" in the United States.

OBJECTIVES OF THE JAPANESE AND INTERNATIONAL PEACE MOVEMENTS

In presenting his views on the present state of the Japanese and international peace movements, Yasui made ten major points. None of these is new or shows any striking departure from earlier Communist pronouncements on the problem of war and peace, but Yasui's statements are interesting in that they illustrate how effectively the peace movement can be used for the purpose of undermining the bases of U. S. and free world foreign and military policies.

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The ten major points Yasui made were the following:

(1) The peace movement's aim in Japan, as elsewhere, is to achieve general and complete disarmament under effective international control -- which he failed to define. (In recent years the term "effective international control" has been fully integrated into the Communist peace propaganda.) Yasui draws from this the conclusion that the Japanese peace movement must defend to the last Japan's so-called peace constitution, i. e., the present constitution which forbids the use of force in the settlement of international conflicts. This spells, of course, opposition to any revision of the constitution which would remove the restrictions preventing Japan from establishing regular armed forces.

(2) The peace movement welcomes the partial nuclear test ban treaty as a first step toward victory of the movement, but it would be dangerous to overestimate the significance of the treaty and to relax the people's vigilance. This formula neatly combines support for Moscow's and for Peking's views of the test ban treaty. Yasui stated that while the peace fighter's aim must, of course, be a speedy agreement on the prohibition of production, stockpiling, use and spread of nuclear weapons, the immediate objective is to oppose (American) underground testing, which remains legal under the present treaty arrangements. He pointed to another "flaw" in the present arrangement, viz., Article IV which permits a withdrawal from the test ban treaty and to the fact that France has refused to sign and even announced that it will proceed to test nuclear weapons. France was singled out for attack, but China remained unmentioned. Yasui also referred to a long open letter he had written to Chairman Khrushchev and to President Kennedy stressing the need for an agreement on the total prohibition of nuclear weapons. He stated that Khrushchev had honored him with a 7,000-word reply, but "unfortunately the American ambassador in Tokyo had refused to pass on his (Yasui's) letter to the President of the United States." He strongly implied that the "ruling circles" in the United States were not interested in discussing seriously a complete ban on nuclear weapons.

(3) Yasui stressed that nowadays no military alliance can assure the security of a nation, and that, on the contrary, such alliances endanger peace. From this flowed the demand for the dissolution of military alliances and for the abrogation of the American-Japanese security pact.

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(4) The peace movement urges the closing down of all foreign military bases since "such a measure would help to relax international tensions and reduce the dangers of war." Yasui, boasting of his expertise in the field of international law, asserted that the existence of (American) military bases on foreign soil infringes on the sovereignties of the countries involved and that the U.S. military presence in Japan constitutes a particularly clear-cut violation of international law. He professed to be convinced that the very existence of U.S. bases on Japanese soil is endangering the survival of the Japanese people who strongly object to the U.S. use of Japan as a "front line position in the American nuclear war strategy."

(5) Yasui called for opposition to any measure that "encourages the development of conditions leading to nuclear war." Under this innocuous heading he elaborated as follows: Professor Bernal of the World Peace Council recently expressed opposition to the use of the Polaris submarine as a "mere transfer of nuclear weapons from land to sea." Yasui fully agrees with him and opposes also the introduction into Japan of the (dual capable) F-105D fighter-bombers by the United States as a measure "enhancing the possibility of nuclear war." Yasui and his peace movement are therefore seeking to develop a strong Japanese mass movement against such (American) policies while lending maximum support to similar movements directed against U.S. war policies elsewhere in the world.

(6) Yasui asserted that the German Government already wants nuclear weapons and that now also Japan is in danger of becoming a "jumping-off place" for imperialism. The international peace movement, he argues, must therefore work strenuously for the establishment of nuclear-free zones everywhere, and especially in Europe and Asia. The UN resolution regarding an African nuclear-free zone is, of course, deserving of full support.

(7) The peace movement desires the strengthening of the United Nations to enable this organization to assure international security and prevent nuclear war in the Far East. This statement turned out to be an introduction to Yasui's renewed demand for the admission of Communist China to its "rightful place" in the United Nations as a measure aimed at relaxing international tensions. Yasui went on from here to recommend the conclusion of a regional security pact between Japan, the United States, the Soviet Union and, of course, Communist China.

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(8) Yasui expressed solidarity with the "national independence movements against colonialism and racial discrimination." Colonialism and racial discrimination, he stated, are encouraging conditions for nuclear war. This in turn led to a strong attack against "a UN trusteeship system that serves as camouflage for (American) colonialism." Yasui elaborated by stating that Okinawa falls into this category and must be returned to Japan.

(9) An effort must be made to redirect the economy from a war-oriented one to a peace-oriented one, i. e., Yasui urged the reduction of military budgets and so on (and opposition to any increase in the modest Japanese defense budget).

(10) The Japanese movement for aid to the A-bomb victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki must be expanded into an international one. Yasui expressed the hope that the United States would give "warm and full cooperation and extend support and succor to the victims of the tragic events in Japan." He stated that such a movement could be an important factor in the struggle against accidental and "planned creation of new A-bomb victims" (and, no doubt, would prove a most effective instrument of anti-American propaganda).

* * * * *

Yasui's presentation of the program of the Japanese peace movement constituted from a propagandistic point of view a very able performance. He appeared to his American audience in the light of a peace fighter free of political ties, of a man who was merely defending the cause of humanity and who appealed to the conscience of Christians everywhere. His often emotion-charged and eloquent argumentation presented Communist objectives in a way as to make them understandable, or rather palatable, to an American non-Communist audience while carefully avoiding the impression of promoting Communist policies.

Yasui stated on several occasions that the Japanese people are watching the U. S. peace movement with much sympathy and concern, that they realize how great are the obstacles in the path of the American movement (implying that in an "imperialist" country, the struggle of the fighter for peace is, by necessity, a difficult one). He praised the Women's Strike for Peace which, "despite accusations of Communist infiltration leveled against it by the Un-American Activities Committee," had persisted in the

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defense of peace, and finally, he linked up his praise of the American peace movement with a strong endorsement for the recent Negro integration march in Washington. Lenin Peace Prize Winner Yasui somehow had succeeded in linking the cause of peace with the Communist position on disarmament, with accusations against the United States for its treatment of minority groups, and with Communist attacks against U.S. military alliances and bases overseas, U.S. land- and sea-based nuclear weapons, U.S. opposition to China's admission to the United Nations, and U.S. insistence on continued underground testing.

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